



ACREAGE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

An assessment of current development

The current Comprehensive Plan sets policy related to rural non farm residential development. The purpose of this review is to assess current development patterns of this type of development for the period of 2000 to 2006 and see if it is on track with current policy.

Language of the Comprehensive Plan currently states:

U R B A N , R U R A L , A N D V I L L A G E G R O W T H

As the County's population grows over the next fifty years, the Plan anticipates the distribution of the people residing in certain geographic areas of the county will remain at their present levels.

The City of Lincoln's population will stay at about 90 percent of the County's population. This means that Lincoln's population will reach beyond 327,000 persons by the year 2025, and to almost 475,000 persons by the year 2050. The balance of the projected population is expected to reside in the County's smaller cities and villages, on farms, and in the rural areas on acreages. For purposes of long term planning, the population of the incorporated cities and towns will stay a little under 3 percent. Persons living in these jurisdictions will grow from the current level of 6,500 persons, to around 9,400 in the year 2025, and near 13,700 in the year 2050.

While no specific count is available on the number of people living on "farms," it is assumed that about one percent of the County's population are part of the "farming community." This means that around 2,500 people reside on farms today. This figure would grow to nearly 3,600 persons in the year 2025, and top 5,000 by the year 2050. The remaining population was assumed to live on acreages (either free standing or as part of rural subdivisions), on other farmsteads, and in the County's handful of unincorporated towns. This demographic element was calculated at around 15,700 in the year 2000, and would grow to about 22,800 by the year 2025, and exceed 33,000 by the year 2050.

P O P U L A T I O N D E N S I T Y

Since about 1970, Lincoln's population density has remained relatively consistent at around 3,000 persons per square mile. Certainly within the urban fabric there are variations from this norm. Areas of residential concentration near the Downtown and many of Lincoln's older neighborhoods have levels of density greater than this average. Conversely, there are locations on the urban fringe with newer neighborhoods having population densities below this level.

As the city experiences additional urbanization in the future, the Plan assumes that the overall city-wide population density will stay at a level comparable to this figure. This assumption applies throughout the initial 25 year planning horizon. Reaffirmation of this population density figure should occur in the future whenever a new comprehensive plan is being prepared for the community.

While sufficient developable land is designated in the plan to accommodate an overall city-wide density comparable to the current figure, the community should strive to maximize efficiency in development.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT

Acknowledge the fundamental “Right to Farm.” Preserve areas throughout the county for agricultural production by designating areas for rural residential development — thus limiting potential conflicts between farms and acreages. Ensure that acreage and rural development preserve and protect environmentally sensitive areas. In the City and County, develop a strategy to maximize the preservation of our nonrenewable resources, such as land and fossil fuels.

Preserve areas for the future growth of incorporated towns in the county, including areas outside of the current one mile zoning jurisdiction of certain towns.

Support new commercial, residential, and industrial development within the incorporated towns in the county.

Provide for about six percent of the total population in the County on acreages.

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Status of development 2000 to 2005

The language of the Comprehensive Plan speaks to population distribution across the county, since census information is not available for these five years, dwelling units are used in this review as a surrogate measurement.

Based on the Count Assessors records from 2000 - 2005 of improved lots, 6,437 Single Family residential units were built in Lincoln and 876 single family residential units were built in the balance of the unincorporated areas of the county within the AG zoned areas . *For Single Family construction, that represented a five year average of about 12% in the county and 88% in the City, (see Table 1).* The annual rural/acreage single family development ranged from 10 to 14% of the city/county total over that period.

Table 2 reflects the split of rural single family residential units between the AG zoning district and the AGR “acreage” district. *The information shows that on the average, 73% of the units are located in the AG district and only 27% are located in the AGR district.* The activity in the AG district has ranged from 65% of the single family units in 2000 to 82% of the units in 2004. Based on this, it would appear that the “Ag Cluster” CUP is by far the predominant single family development technique.

Note, the Assessors records reflect lots/parcels that had a single family residential Improvement recorded and do not reflect building permits or other reporting methods. This data base query was outside all corporate limits in the county.

Tables 3 and 4 use the Planning Department Land Use data base. This data base is maintained by building permits and thus has some inherent anomalies due to inconsistent requirements for permits. However, this does provide another basis for trend review.

Table 3 reflects single family statistics of the City of Lincoln and the balance of the

county, including the towns and cities. Based on this, *about 88% of all single family permits have occurred in Lincoln during the last five years and about 12% have occurred outside the City.*

Table 4 reflects all residential units, including duplexes, multifamily/apartment units and other residential units. *This shows that 99,277 residential units were constructed in Lincoln, reflecting about 92% of all dwellings units. The remaining 8% were located in the balance of the county.* It should be noted that the negative numbers for 2003 are due to the annexation of Yankee Hill and Pine Lake neighborhoods into the City of Lincoln corporate limits. 2005 includes new aerial photography to locate structures.

Table 5 is compiled based on new single family detached building permits only and permits reported by the other towns, for the calendar years 2000 through 2005. Though the numbers are not a perfect match due to the different sources, the trends are substantially the same, *81 to 90 % of the single family permits are in Lincoln, 3-8% are in the other incorporated towns and 6 to 12% are in the rural unincorporated area.* An interesting point of this table is that of the rural county permits, *about 29% where in the Lincoln 3 mile, 12% were in the other town one mile jurisdictions and fully 58% were in the Lancaster County Jurisdiction.* This further supports the widely distributed activity of single family development and the apparent use of clustering to create rural lots.

The attached maps show the distribution of the lots improved with new single family residential construction from 2000 - 2005, based on the data of the Assessors files. The combined AG/AGR zoning map shows the development pattern being generally across the county, with the exception of the Northeast quadrant. The bulk of the activity seems to be south of "O" Street and generally follows the main paved roads. This pattern of development may relate to the existence of the Rural Water district in the south, generally more ground water opportunity to the south and a finer system of infrastructure and support in the southern portion of the county.

The second two maps show the distribution of lots with new single family residential by AG and AGR zoning districts. The pattern of development in those districts follows the same overall pattern noted above.

Observations and conclusions:

More than 90% of all residential dwellings are being built in Lincoln during the five year period reviewed. It would appear that the Comprehensive Plan goal of 90% of population being in Lincoln is being met.

While the Plan calls for about 6% of the population to occur in the rural areas of the county, the Assessors improved lot base shows 9 -12% of single family residential units are occurring in the rural areas outside of Lincoln or the other incorporated cities and towns. The Planning Department Land Use base indicates about 8% of all residential units are located outside of Lincoln. The trend appears to indicate that single family development in the rural areas may be growing at a somewhat faster rate during the

studied period, to the loss of the other cities and towns (as a group) of the county. This trend needs continued monitoring, to see if it continues or is of a short term duration. If this does continue, it will need to be brought to the attention of the Planning Commission and possible review of the Comprehensive Plan.

An additional item of interest that was determined using the Assessors base is that during this 5 year period, 44% of the rural single family residential units were on parcels of 20 acres or larger.

The distribution of single family construction in the county is dispersed but shows some clustering to the south part of the county and little in the northeast portion of the county. There is some evidence of an association between paved roads and development. It appears Norris School, the availability of rural water or better ground water, the state lakes and the finer grain of paved roads is supporting/encouraging more development in the southern region of the county.

August 1, 2006

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Table 1. Single family residential units zoned AG/AGR compared to city single family residential units created 2000-2005.

Year	Year Built (City)	Year Built (AG/AGR)	Total
2000	950 (88%)	134 (12%)	1084
2001	1039 (90%)	111 (10%)	1150
2002	1109 (86%)	177 (14%)	1286
2003	1347 (90%)	153 (10%)	1500
2004	1219 (86%)	195 (14%)	1414
2005*	773 (88%)	106 (12%)	879
Total	6437	876	7313
Average	1073 (88%)	146 (12%)	1219

Notes:

*Assessor's data through May 2005 due to change in CAMA system.

All units are single family residential units.

Rural units (AG/AGR) do not include units located in Lancaster county towns and villages.

Some units may have been annexed

Table 2. Rural single family residential units by AG/AGR zoning created 2000-2005.

Year	Year Built (AG)	Year Built (AGR)	Total
2000	92 (69%)	42 (31%)	134
2001	78 (70%)	33 (30%)	111
2002	116 (65%)	61 (35%)	177
2003	113 (74%)	40 (26%)	153
2004	159 (82%)	36 (18%)	195
2005*	86 (81%)	20 (19%)	106
Total	644	232	876
Average	107 (73%)	39 (27%)	146

Notes:

*Assessor's data through May 2005 due to change in CAMA system.

All units are single family residential units.

Rural units (AG/AGR) do not include units located in Lancaster County towns and villages.

Some units may have been annexed.

Table 3. Single family residential units as reported in land use database.

Year	Single Family (City)	%	Single Family (Balance of County)	%	Single Family (Total)
2001	55,297	87.2	8,074	12.8	63,371
2002	56,092 (795)	87.2	8,201 (127)	12.8	64,293
2003	57,118 (1026)	87.6	8,039 (-162)*	12.4	65,157
2004	58,192 (1074)	87.7	8,120 (81)	12.3	66,342
2005	59,115 (923)	87.3	8,570 (450)*	12.7	67,685
Total	3818				658
Average	955				165

Notes:

Building permits are not available for Lancaster County incorporated towns and villages.

Land use database is determined by occupancy permits.

Not all areas of the county require building permits.

Units in balance of the county includes towns and villages but may not be current.

* 2003 decrease due to the annexation of Yankee Hill and Pine Lake subdivisions.

* 2005 increase due to updated aerial photography which allowed for single family units to be identified.

Table 4. Total residential units as reported in land use database.

Year	Total Units (City)	%	Total Units (Balance of County)	%	Total Units
2001	96,273	91.7	8,675	8.3	104,948
2002	97,479	91.7	8,807	8.3	106,274
2003	99,231	91.9	8,643	8.1	107,874
2004	100,910	92.0	8,730	8.0	109,670
2005	102,492	91.7	9,223	8.3	111,715
Average	99,277		8,815		108,096

Notes:

Building permits are not available for Lancaster County incorporated towns and villages.

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2003 annexation of Yankee Hill and Pine Lake subdivisions.

2005 increase due to updated aerial photography which allowed for single family units to be identified.

Table 5: New Single Family Detached Dwelling Units (2000 - 2005)

Year	Lincoln (90%)		Small Towns (3%)		Rural County (7%)				Total County
	#	%	#	%	Lincoln ETJ	Small Town ETJ	Other	% All RC	
2000	1,041	89%	54	5%	36	9	24	6%	1,164
2001	1,108	90%	41	3%	36	14	36	7%	1,235
2002	1,281	88%	56	4%	47	21	56	8%	1,461
2003	1,565	87%	67	4%	38	29	96	9%	1,795
2004*	1,227	83%	82	6%	40	15	115	11%	1,479
2005	974	81%	91	8%	22	7	110	12%	1,204
6 Year									
Total	7,196		391		219	95	437		8,338
Average	1,199	86%	65	5%	37	16	73	9%	1,390

Notes:

The percentages in () in the headings are estimated annual growth rates from the Comprehensive Plan.

*The 2004 "Small Towns" and the 2004 "Rural County: Other" building permit totals, in (), are estimates because of the May 2004 tornado. Please see Table 1 and Table 2 for an explanation.

Data according to new residential building permits issued, occupancy not known.

"Lincoln" includes all permits within the corporate boundaries of the City of Lincoln.

"Small Towns" includes all permits within the corporate boundaries of all incorporated communities.

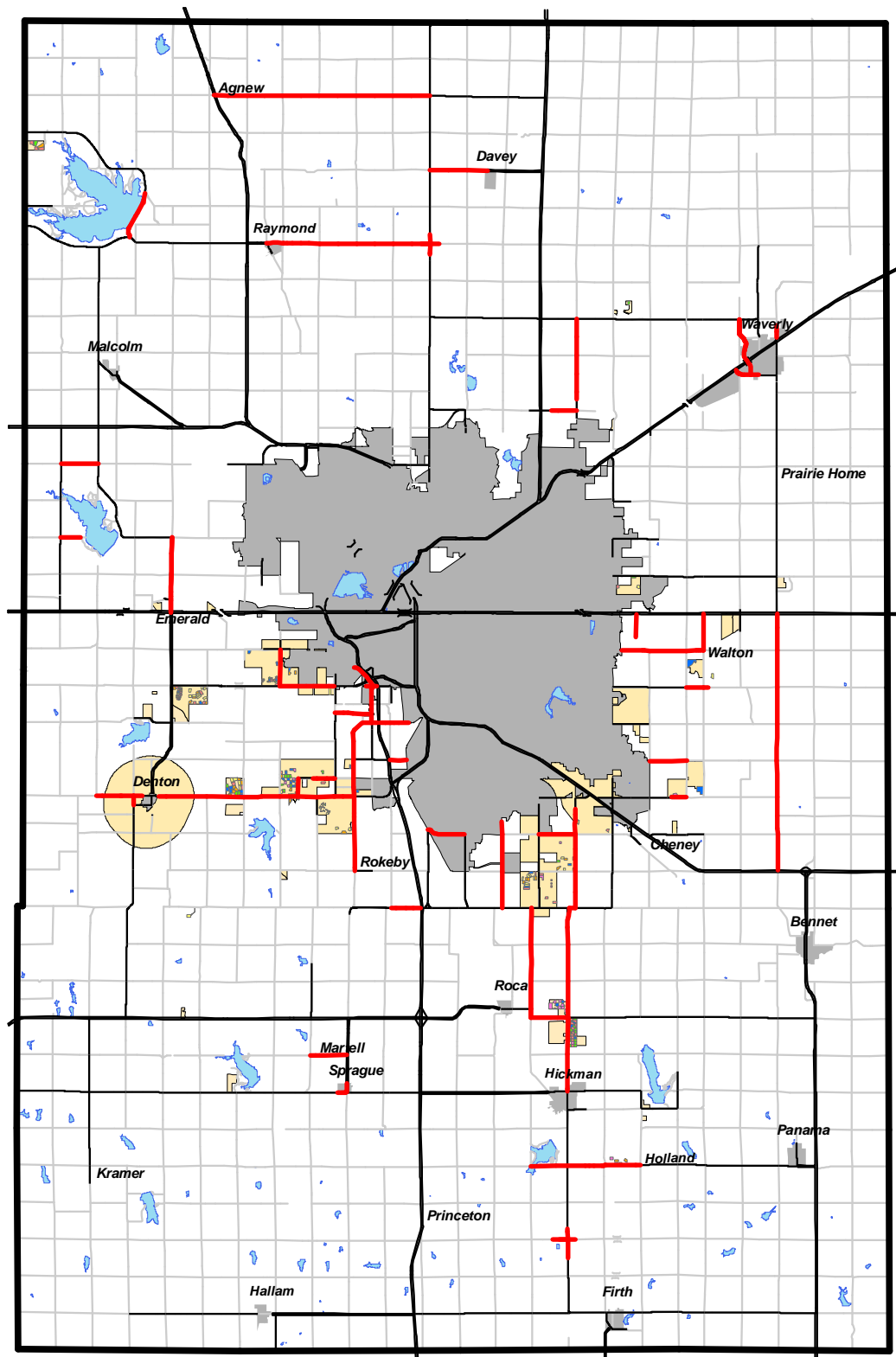
"Rural County" includes all permits not within the corporate boundaries of an incorporated community.

"Lincoln ETJ" includes all permits within the 3 mile ETJ of Lincoln, but not within the corporate boundaries

"Small Town ETJ" includes all permits within the 1 mile ETJ of incorporated communities.

"Other" includes all permits not in an incorporated community or their ETJ.

"Total County" includes all permits within Lancaster County.



Lots with New Single Family Construction with AGR zoning (2000 - 2005)

Year 2000 (N= 42)

Year 2003 (N= 40)

AGR Zoning

Year 2001 (N= 33)

Year 2004 (N= 36)

Roads Paved or Resurfaced (2000 - 2005)

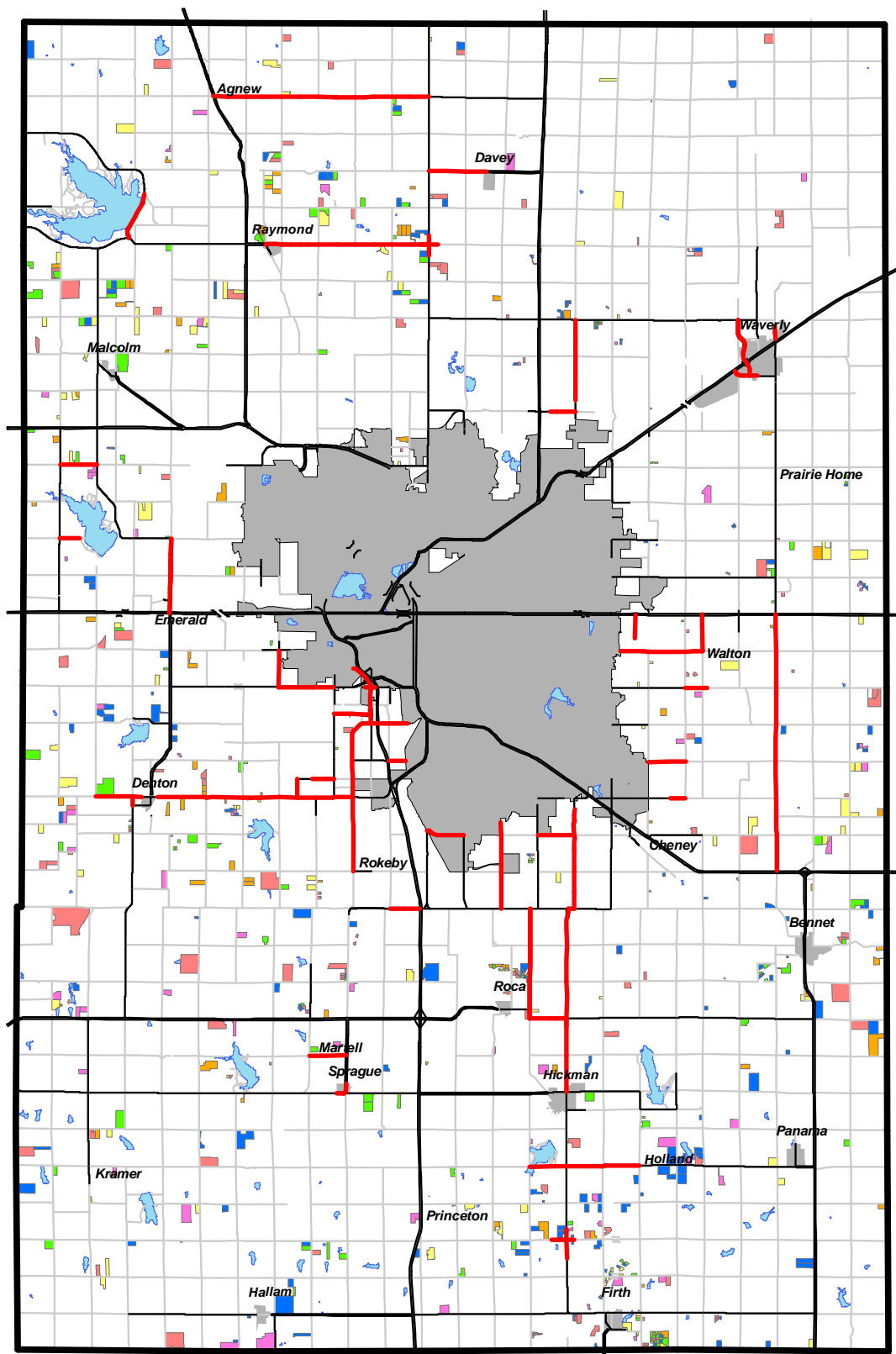
Year 2002 (N= 61)

Year 2005 (N= 20)*

* 2005 was a partial year due to Assessor database change.

Source: Roads, Lancaster County Engineer's Office
Parcels, Lancaster County Assessor/Register of Deeds





Lots with New Single Family Construction with AG zoning (2000 - 2005)

Yellow Year 2000 (N= 92)

Green Year 2003 (N=113)

Red Roads Paved or Resurfaced (2000 - 2005)

Orange Year 2001 (N= 78)

Blue Year 2004 (N=159)

* 2005 was a partial year due to Assessor database change.

Pink Year 2002 (N= 116)

Magenta Year 2005 (N= 86)*

Source: Roads, Lancaster County Engineer's Office
Parcels, Lancaster County Assessor/Register of Deeds

